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SCHUYLKILL INTERMEDIATE UNIT NO. 29

Exceptional Children Program

P.O. BOX 130, MAR LIN, PA 17951

TELEPHONE: 717/544-9131 - 717/544-3565

DR. ROBERT M. ALSPACH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHARLES E. WERNERT, DIRECTOR, SPECIAL EDUCATION

MAY 18 1993

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

ELEANOR K. MARTIN

CHARLES P. NARADKO

MICHAEL J. NARADKO

Communications and to make myself available to the work of the committee. Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

William J. Gaydos

William J. Gaydos
Teacher, HI Program

WJG:csh

Enc: Article Philadelphia Inquirer
Article: Lotus Magazine
Resume

PS Group - 4

TV

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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MAIL ROOM

A half minute of triene time calls for about

and that they begin to dress and act in a manner that imitates the images. They also choose their national leaders from among the images.

"In summary, this place seems to be engaged in some kind of weird mental training akin to brainwashing."

If this is a fair description of the situation in the United States, it is also becoming a description of many other parts of the world. Right

now, about 60 percent of the world population has access to television. In many places where television has recently arrived—remote villages in Africa, South America, Indonesia, northern Canada; places where there are not even roads—satellite communica-

ence in the heads of everyone wherever they are. The end result will be worldwide monoculture.

their own; their control is far more subtle. It works in the minds of television producers who, when thinking about what programs to

produce, have to mitigate their desires by their need to sell the programs to corporate backers. An effective censorship results.

While a small number of corporations pay for 75 percent of commercial broadcast time and thereby dominate that

medium, they now also pay for more than 50 percent of public television. During the Reagan years, federal support for noncommercial television was virtually eliminated, leaving a void that public television filled by appealing to corporations. As corporate



FREEDOM OF SPEECH FOR THE WEALTHY

We think of television as a democratic medium since we all get to watch it in our homes. But if it is "democratic" on the receiv-

*The average American who watches
five hours of television per day sees approximately
21,000 commercials per year.*

Very few medium-sized corporations or businesses, and even fewer individuals, could pay \$250,000 for a single message broadcast to the world.

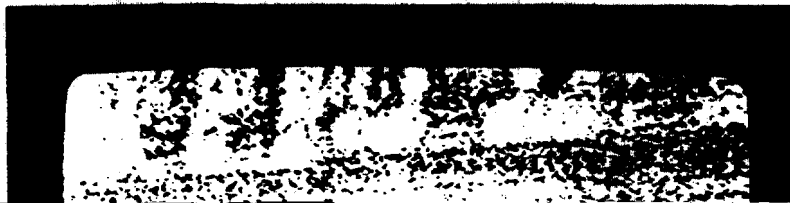
If you and your friends decided that you had a very important statement to make about an issue—let's say the cutting down of old-growth redwoods in the Pacific Northwest—and if you were very fortunate (and rich), perhaps you

could manage to get your message of the press is available only to those who own one." Similarly, freedom of speech is more available to some than to others, namely, to the people who can purchase it on national television. This leads to certain kinds of information dominating the airwaves.

The 100 largest corporations

are responsible for the shocking statistic: *The average American who watches five hours of television per day sees approximately 21,000 commercials per year.* That's 21,000 repetitions of essentially identical messages about life, aggressively placed into viewers' minds, all saying, *Buy something—do it now!*

So an entire nation of people is sitting night after night in their rooms, in a passive condition, receiving information from



of their TV and the way lives are scheduled around it, ought to be sufficient, *de facto* proof of TV's hypnotic and addictive abilities. In fact, when I interviewed people for *Four Arguments*, interviewees consistently used terms such as "hypnotic," "mesmerizing," or "addictive" to describe their experiences of television viewing. And many used the term "zombie" to describe how their kids looked while watching television.

Eventually, I sought scientific

size of the screen. Sitting at a normal distance, the eye can gather most of the image without scanning the screen for it. The image comes in whole. This lack of *seeking* images disrupts the normal association between eye movement and thought stimulation, which is a genetically provided safety valve for human beings. Before modern times, any unusual event in the environment would attract instant attention: all the senses would immediately turn to it, including

come at their own speed, outside of the viewer's control; an image stream. One doesn't "pull out" and contemplate TV images, as if they were still photographs or images described in a written passage. If you attempted to do that you would fall behind the image stream. So there are two choices: surrender to the images or withdraw from the experience. But if you are going to watch television (or film) at all, you *must* allow the images to enter you at their own

Even in the absence of chemical evidence of addiction, the amount of time people spend daily in front of their TV and the way lives are scheduled around it, ought to be sufficient, de facto proof of TV's hypnotic and addictive abilities.

greater subtlety. The richer the detail of the image, the more involving it is to the viewer. (This comparative advantage for film imagery over TV will only be partially mitigated when "high-definition TV" is introduced in a few years.)

Films are almost always shown on a much larger screen than are

most engaging and participatory of any media. Since there is no inherent time limitation with books and newspapers, they can offer much more complex detail and background than any so-called visual medium. If I should now ask you to imagine a lush green field with a trickling stream, billowy clouds above, two great

reading a paragraph on a page, then realizing that we hadn't actually read it, then having to read the same material a second time. In doing this, we apply conscious effort to the process; we put our brain into a cognitive mode in order to grasp the information.

Also when reading, one has the opportunity to review the materi-

a drug, it is not really Valium; it is *speed*.

ACCELERATION OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

In their famous study of the effects of television, researchers at Australian National University predicted that as television became

But there are also more subtle ways that television speeds humans up.

I am a member of the pre-television generation. Until I was in my late teens, there wasn't any television. So as a child, my after-school activities were different from those of the average child today.

I can recall how it felt coming home from school every day. First,

ness as serving an important creative function. Out of this nothing-to-do condition some activity would eventually emerge. You got to the bottom of your feelings, you let things slide to their lowest state, and *then* you took charge. You experienced yourself in movement, with ideas. Taking all young people in the country as a group,

generation of young people who are less able to act on their own or to be creative. Educators are already telling us that this is so. This habit may also be depriving young people of the fundamental self-knowledge that dealing with one's feelings produces. And it leaves this new drugged generation feeling that they can't experience life without technological and chemical props. So TV not only trains them for drug dependency, it also trains them for commodity dependency.

PERCEPTUAL SPEEDUP AND CONFUSION

When watching television, the viewer is moved into a perceptual universe that is much, much faster than ordinary life. To get an idea of how this works, I suggest that you turn on your television set now and switch to a commercial network. (This is an especially useful exercise to do during prime time when more money is spent on production values.) Count the number of times something happens in the image that could not happen in ordinary life. One moment the camera puts you in front of the image, in another moment you are behind it or above it or rolling around it. Then you are out on the street; then it is tomorrow or yesterday. A commercial appears on the screen with dancers, music, and cartoons. A couple walks on a hillside hundreds of yards away but you can hear them speaking as though you were next to them. Words flash on and off the screen.

There are suddenly two, simulta-

humans in rapid succession. Young people are running toward you—*Cut*. Now they are on a beach—*Cut*. Now you are watching beer poured into a glass—*Cut*. Now music is playing—*Cut*. An announcer speaks from somewhere. Now you are in Europe. Now in Asia. There is a war, there is a commercial . . . All of this is jammed together in a steady stream of imagery, fracturing your attention while condensing time and mixing categories of reality, non-reality, and semi-reality.

These image fluctuations and technical changes, as well as hundreds of other kinds not mentioned, are what I have called technical events in television imagery. These alterations of the image could not happen in ordinary life; they are *technical* alterations only possible within moving-image media: films, video, or television.

If you actually counted these technical events as I suggested above, you would find that during commercials—especially during prime time—the image changes at an average of ten to fifteen times per thirty-second commercial. During a regular program on a commercial channel, camera movements or technical events occur about seven to ten times per minute. On public television programs, there are probably three to four camera movements or technical events per minute. (There are fewer on public television than commercial television simply because commercial television can afford more cameras, more edits, and more technology. Similarly,

say that "advertising is the most interesting thing on television," they are not aware they are speaking about the *technology* of advertising.)

This hyperactivated imagery continues for as long as a viewer is watching the screen. For heavy viewers of television it means five or six (or more) hours living within a perceptual universe that is constantly fractured and in which time and events are both condensed and accelerated.

Finally, the set goes off. The viewers are back in their rooms. Nothing is moving. The room does not rise up or whirl around. People do not suddenly flash on and off in front of them. It doesn't become tomorrow or yesterday in a flash. Actually, nothing at all is happening. There is simply the same room as before: walls, windows, furniture. Ordinary life and ordinary feelings and thoughts. Very slow, by comparison. Too slow. Anxiety sets in.

Having lived in the amazingly rapid world of television imagery, ordinary life is dull by comparison and far too slow. But consider how it affects one's ability to be in nature. The natural world is *really* slow. Save for the waving of trees in the wind or the occasional animal movement, things barely happen at all. To experience nature, to feel its subtleties requires human perceptual ability that is capable of slowness. It requires that human beings approach the experience with patience and calm. Life in the modern world does not encourage that; it encourages the opposite. Cars, planes, video games, faxes

Continued from page 54

Toxic TV

nature. We are trained to seek satisfaction in the packaging that technology provides. Big "hits." We live in a world of constant catharsis, constant change, constant unrest. While out in the *real* world, in nature, we become anxious and uncomfortable. We desire to get back indoors, to get that TV set back on, to get "up to speed."

For children, this change is very serious, and has been well noted by educators. Countless teachers have told me how young people are utterly unable to maintain attention. They become bored after only a few minutes of the same subject. They need constant change. And they need the teacher to "perform" rather than teach, to deliver material with snappy punch lines. As for reading, very

space travel, and acceleration. It makes our insides—brain and nervous system—compatible with the world outside ourselves. For human beings, it is the worst possible combination of influences. It puts our brains into a passive alpha state, zapping our thinking processes, and destroying our creative impulses. Simultaneously, it speeds up our nervous systems, making us too fast to feel calm, too fast to read, almost too fast to relate meaningfully to other human beings, and too fast for nature. From this alienation training, a new human emerges. Speed junkie. Videovoid. Technovoid. •

From "In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations." Copyright 1991 by Jerry Mander. Printed with permission from Sierra Club Books. The Book is available at bookstores or by direct mail from Sierra Club book store, 730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109, (415)923-

open the door to our living room and let the pain come up. Every time our pain is immersed in mindfulness, it will lose some of its strength and later when it returns to the store consciousness, it will be weaker. When it comes up again, if our mindfulness is there to welcome it like a mother greeting her baby, the pain will be lessened and will go back down to the basement even weaker. In this way, we create good circulation in our psyche and we begin to feel much better. If the blood is circulating well in our body, we experience well-being. If the energy of our mental formations is circulating well between our store consciousness and mind consciousness, we also have the feeling of well-being. We do not need to be afraid of our pain if our mindfulness is there to embrace it and transform it.

Our consciousness is the totality of our seeds, the totality of our films.

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RESUME

WILLIAM J. GAYDOS

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Country Hill Road
Apt. 14, Building 2
Orwigsburg, Pa. 17961
(717) 366-1743 (home)
(717) 544-9131 (work)

OBJECTIVES

To develop a comprehensive technology program which facilitates the teaching/learning processes, initiates innovative educational projects using technology, and enhance creative problem solving skills for developing a twenty-first century mind. To fuse technology with the educational community as a means for disseminating information.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Twenty-three (plus) years of professional experience with a student population that required individualized materials, maintaining a flexible learning environment, and implementing creative teaching strategies.

MEDIA TECHNOLOGY SKILLS:

Media management, media production, instructional design and development, computer technology, captioning, grant writing, photography and creative problem solving skills.

POSITION DESIRED:

Media/Information Specialist; Coordinator of Information Services, Communication/Media Specialist, Media Specialist

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Developed an 83 page document, highlighting a special summer program for adult drop-outs (Project Second Chance) which necessitated writing, photography, and computer graphic skills that was printed and distributed to school boards, administrators, PDE, and participants.

Produced a slide presentation of the same aforementioned program for public relations and presentation to the PDE which resulted in the expansion of funding sources and eventual rating as a model program.

Coordinated media services for a county wide day-long inservice program.

**"One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar."
Helen Keller**

ACHIEVEMENTS
(continued:)

Currently serving on a PDE, Bureau of Special Education committee to develop a transitional program (ALP) for use by secondary teachers working with the exceptional population (LD, PH, HI, VI) to prepare the student for post-secondary education.

Member of an IU #29 committee to upgrade teacher evaluation criteria.

Developed a comprehensive guide for teachers, counselors, and HI students that may be interested in applying to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (RIT/NTID) Rochester, NY.

Scripted and produced video, slide and 8mm films.

Trained in facilitating and directing creative problem solving group sessions.

PUBLICATIONS:

Copyrighted and published Understanding Comprehensive Language Evaluation (UNCLE) for Pre-School Developmentally Delayed Children.

Copyrighted: Language Arts for the Secondary School Student.

Articles published by Technical Assistance Sensory Impaired Program (TASIP) newsletter, a resource center in special education.

Wrote and demonstrated Behavioral Modification Programs for teachers and aides.

Compiled, documented, and produced printed and visual information for a model program in vocational education.

**EDUCATIONAL
PHILOSOPHY:**

Educators can create an enriched environment for learning with the sensible application of technology to the management of their curriculum. The teacher is the ultimate manager as to how successful the technology integrates with the subject material they are presenting. Technology is only as good as the person who is trained to use it is and use it effectively as a tool, a tutor, or tutee.

SPECIAL

Organizational Skills, Planning & Management, Coordinating Skills,

RESUME - William J. Gaydos
Continued: Page Two

**CURRENT
EMPLOYER:**

Schuylkill County Intermediate Unit #29
Exceptional Children's Program
Box 130, Marlin Center
Marlin, Pa. 17951
(717) 544-9131
(717) 544-4737

**DEGREES
CERTIFICATIONS:**

B.A. Liberal Arts (Marietta College)
MEd. Communications Disorders (Bloomsburg College)
MEd. Communications Media (Indiana University, Pa.)
- Summer Internship ITV (Rochester Institute)
Certification Media Specialist (Indiana University of Pa.)
Certification Supervisor of Special Education (Penn State
University)
Basic and Advanced Training in Job Seeking and Job/Keeping Skills
(JIST) (Indianapolis, Ind.)
Post Graduate Credits (Gallaudet University)
Computer Coursework (Allentown College, Albright College)
(MacIntosh)

MILITARY:

Honorable Discharge - U.S. Army, SP4, Signal Corp.

REFERENCES:

References furnished upon request.

Think Creatively

Sunday, May 2, 1993

Eots of hits. And kicks. And gunplay. . . .
Lots of learning. About kicking and gunplay.

Children's television: Quantity, not quality

By Christopher Scanlan
INQUIRER WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — From the 24-hour Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon to the Fox Children's Network, children have more television programs targeted at them than at any time since TV sets first appeared in American living rooms. *X-Men*. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. *Saved by the Bell*. *Full House*.

But in this case, critics say, more is less.

In 1980, the three major networks were showing 11 hours a week of educational shows, according to a study by Squire Rushnell, a former vice president for children's television at ABC. By 1990, such programming had dwindled to less than two hours a week. Today? "It's less than an hour," he says.

Children's television "remains the video equivalent of a Twinkie. Kids enjoy it despite the absolute absence of any nutritional content," says Rep. Edward J. Markey (D., Mass.), chairman of a House subcommittee that oversees the television industry.

Although the 1990 Children's Television Act requires broadcasters to air "educational and informational programming" for children, Congress and the Federal Communications Commission largely left it up to broadcasters to decide what that meant.

"For three years the act was ignored," Carol Rasco, a domestic policy adviser to President Clinton, told the National Summit on Children and Families in early April. "The same kinds of folks who informed us that ketchup is a vegetable were happy to certify *G.I. Joe* as an educational television program."

People have been complaining about TV and its effect on children almost since the first black-and-white sets began appearing in the late 1940s. But the subject of TV and kids is especially volatile today. TV viewing is now considered a key cultural indicator, a likely culprit for everything from obesity to low test scores, to record-high murder and suicide rates among American children. There's even a growing movement by doctors and others to label television violence a public health threat that needs as much attention as guns, drugs and alcohol.

The harshest critics concede that other factors, such as economic woes and family disintegration, are also at work. But the fact remains that TV is more violent than ever and offers fewer opportunities for education, studies show. Critics say that children are routinely presented with stereotypes about women, minorities, the poor and elderly and

lar entertainment is full of violence, from fairy tales to Shakespeare. Gerbner responds that the "tragic, symbolic violence" of *Hamlet* has been swamped by "happy violence" that "shows no pain or tragic consequences."

Equally disturbing criticisms come from studies that suggest TV's portrayals of sex and drugs give children the wrong messages.

"For every message on television that says, 'Just say no,' there are six that say: 'Can't sleep, take a drug. Want to lose weight, take a drug. Feeling a little down, take a drug or have a beer or a glass of wine,'" says child psychologist John Condry of Cornell University, who studied drug messages on television for a yet-to-be-released study.

As for sex, another researcher, E.J. Roberts observed, it's "treated as a prelude to or context for violence, or is viewed as an aspect of life to be treated with nervous laughter."

Of the approximately 112 hours most people are awake each week, Condry estimates, American children spend about one-third of them — 40 hours — watching television or playing video games on it.

"Regardless of what they watch, children who are heavy viewers tend to read less, play less, be more obese," says Condry in a scathing indictment of television published in the current issue of *Daedalus*, the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

"Television is a thief of time; it robs children of critical hours required for learning about the world, about one's place in it," he says. "That is bad enough, but television is worse than a thief; it is a liar. For the little truth television communicates, there is much that is false and distorted, about values as well as facts."

Consider, for example, how one 10-year-old describes the characters on the popular sitcom *Married . . . With Children*.

Says Robert Mauro, of Severna Park, Md.: Dad Al is a "weird shoe salesman." Wife Peg "is mean and takes all his money." Daughter Kelly is "really stupid." Son Bud: "I like Bud. I just think he wants girls."

Under pressure from the White House and Congress, the FCC has begun cracking down on stations that fail to live up to the Children's Television Act, holding up license renewals for stations that said reruns of *The Jetsons* and *The Flintstones* were educational.

"The previous administration's FCC wouldn't enforce the bill, but ours will," Clinton aide Rasco said. Stations cry censorship but have begun to respond

Violence on Television

about the Beaver. This isn't quite the same when there's murder and nude scenes all the time," says Karen Zink-Brown. A mother of three, Zink-Brown is part of a Maryland grass-roots movement, Campaign for

Kids TV, which plans to "adopt" local stations to monitor children's programming.

The main course on children's TV menu today is likely to be a show like *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, a cartoon that features so many karate kicks and other violence that many parents react as La Atwater of Catonsville, Md., does when her 4-year-old daughter, Caroline, asks to watch. "I just cringe."

University of Washington epidemiologist Brandon Centerwall argues in a new study that TV violence leads to real violence.

He compared homicide rates among whites in the United States, Canada and South Africa between 1947 and 1975. South Africa banned television during that quarter-century.

His findings: A 93 percent increase in the U.S. murder rate, a 92 percent jump in Canada. In South Africa, the murder rate went down by 7 percent. Centerwall considered other explanations for the dramatic increase, such as civil unrest, availability of firearms and economic conditions. "None provides a viable explanation," he says.

"There's a difference between correlation and cause and effect," counters Chuck Sherman, a spokesman for the National Association of Broadcasters.

Centerwall acknowledges that other factors, such as poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, influence violent crime. "Nevertheless," he argues in the *Public Interest Quarterly*, "the evidence indicates if, hypothetically, television technology had never been developed, there would today be 10,000 fewer homicides each year in the United States, 70,000 fewer rapes, and 700,000 fewer injurious assaults. Violent crime would be half what it is."

A more pervasive consequence, researcher George Gerbner argues, is what he terms the "mean-world syndrome" that leaves children frightened and deluded.

Violence saturates children's TV programming far more than the prime-time shows adults watch, says Gerbner, dean emeritus of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

Gerbner and a research team have been tracking television violence since 1967, counting every time someone hurts or kills or threatens to do so, on television shows. The latest count, as of November 1991: 32 acts of violence per hour during children's programming on network television, compared to four violent acts during prime time.

There is less mayhem on cable, but it's still significant, says Gerbner, who counted 17 acts of violence per hour of children's programs on cable networks.

In a study last year, TV Guide gave a chilling breakdown of the violence displayed over 10 Washington stations during one 18-hour period in April 1992. The tally was 1,846 individual acts of violence. Among them: 362 scenes of gunplay; 389 assaults; 673 scenes of punching, pushing, slapping, dragging; 226 scenes of menacing with a weapon, and at least 175 fatalities.

Industry defenders say the history of popu-

Cable Broadcast

SOURCE: Knight-Ridder Tribune

The Philadelphia Inquirer

network says it will air *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?*, a geography show.

Says child psychologist Condry: "We may tinker with content, make certain that better programs

are made available to children, but the more important need is to discourage children from using television as a source for information about the world.

"I think we've abandoned our children," he says. "We've left it to our children to figure out what sense to make of television, and unfortunately, that's the one thing our children cannot do."

Where to Write

■ Concerned about what's on television for children? How many hours of educational and informational programming — and what kinds of shows — should stations broadcast? You can send ideas to the Federal Communications Commission, which is considering tougher rules for children's TV. The deadline is Friday, but the FCC will accept contributions until June 7.

Write to: Children's TV, MM Docket 93-48, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Room 222, 1919 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.